

# TORIES' ELECTION GAMBLE

**Labour can win**

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**Ten years of austerity**

>>Page 5

**Boris Johnson is a**

**liar** >>Page 4



# Socialist Worker

£1 | No 2678 | 30 October - 5 November 2019 | socialistworker.co.uk

## MIGRANT DEATHS



'Fortress Britain' killed 39 migrants

## AUSTERITY DEATHS



Stephen Smith died after being denied benefits

## GRENFELL DEATHS



Tory policies killed 72 people in Grenfell fire

## GRENFELL INQUIRY

**'Blame lies with the powerful' say campaigners**

A LONG-AWAITED report into the Grenfell Fire was published this week.

The media fixate on alleged fire service "failings". But these must be seen in the context of massive cuts. Campaigners insist the real blame lies with the government—and its lackeys in Kensington and Chelsea council.

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# PUNISH KILLER TORIES

# KICK OUT JOHNSON

## PROTESTS



**Global uprising led by young and the betrayed**

THE WORLD is being swept by a huge rebellion against neoliberalism and tyranny.

In Catalonia, Chile, Ecuador, Guinea, Haiti, Hong Kong, Iraq and Sudan thousands have taken to the streets—and fought fierce battles with police or army.

Young people feel especially betrayed by the system that delivers only mass unemployment.

>>Pages 7,8,14&15 and 20

## ROYAL MAIL

**Bosses plan army of scabs to break post strike**

ROYAL MAIL is hoping to undermine planned strikes by recruiting thousands of scabs to replace workers. But firm action by the CWU union can smash its plans.

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## THE THINGS THEY SAY

**'The name of this beetle is particularly poignant since it is likely that undiscovered species are being lost all the time'**

Dr Max Barclay from the the Natural History Museum explains why they called a beetle *Nelloptodes gretae* after environmental campaigner Greta Thunberg

**'A curse will fall on all of them. They will remember how they defiled this sacred place until they die'**

Professor Marcia Langton, of the Australian Indigenous Studies department at Melbourne University as tourists rushed to climb Australia's indigenous sacred rock Uluru on the final day before a ban came into force

**'We placed each piece of lace in a small bowl, filled with cool water and a tea bag'**

Dressmaker to the queen Angela Kelly explains how they made the christening gown for the royal offspring the right shade

**'Lock him up!'**

Chant by baseball fans in Washington when Donald Trump showed up



# Cruel Universal Credit drives poor women into prostitution

**VULNERABLE WOMEN** are being forced into prostitution because of the Tories' Universal Credit (UC) benefit. It is more evidence of why the nasty benefit must be scrapped now.

An MPs' committee found that the five-week payment wait for new claimants plus other problems means more women use "survival sex" to get by.

Julie said, "I didn't go out looking for it, I said no at first. It wasn't until about three weeks later that I said, 'Ok, yeah,' because I need money. It was during the eight weeks that I was waiting to get the Universal Credit. I couldn't wait eight weeks for money. I just couldn't."

Another claimant suffered long waits for her UC payments, and when she did receive them they didn't cover her basic expenses. She was caught shoplifting food.

"The manager said if I gave him [oral sex] he'd let me off," she said. "What could I do? It was that or have the police called. I just did it. He said afterwards that if I did the same next week he'd let



UNIVERSAL CREDIT has brought misery

me have forty quid's worth of stock. It seemed like a fortune.

"I got my money, and again it was short, and again it was gone on bills before I'd even thought of food.

"So I left the baby with next door and went down to the shop. It's been like that for months now."

The committee found evidence "that many of those who turned to survival sex were single mothers, who may also fear losing custody of their children".

K, who has three children, said she is about to be moved onto UC and will lose £200 a month. "I don't have any savings," she said.

"I need to save some money so I am planning to escort or massaging or something similar. The thought of going into debt and having no money is really scary. I have children. I can't do that."

The committee said the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) initially "displayed little interest" in the reality of claimants' lives.

"Its initial response was defensive, dismissive and trite."

Student M, who is working in a brothel, said this was an "attempt to cover the DWP's back and be like, 'Oh well, you can't prove that it is us or that it is Universal Credit'."

"It kind of proved the point that it is poverty and it is this horrible system that is making us be in the sex industry."

**FUNDING FOR** buses in England has dropped by nearly £400 million in a decade. A report last week showed that more than half of local authorities have cut funding by 50 percent or more since 2009.

The Campaign for Better Transport added that over 3,000 bus routes have been axed. Campaigners say older people and people living in rural areas are hardest hit.



Underfunded bus

**THE "GET ready for Brexit"** campaign went continental last week, with Britain's Belgian embassy establishing its information point for hauliers. Adorned with a poster saying "Soyez pret pour le Brexit," it had only one flaw. It was set up in Flanders, where the official language is Dutch.

## Loan shark runs away from debts

**MORE** than 5,000 QuickQuid customers face losing payouts after Britain's biggest payday lender shut.

The Financial Ombudsman Service has 5,500 complaints for mis-sold loans against its parent firm Casheuronet.

But QuickQuid's US owners Enova are simply leaving after failing to reach agreement over how many customers it should compensate.

The Ombudsman Service said later, "It is unlikely we will be able to progress with complaints about Casheuronet."

QuickQuid, which closed on Friday, charged 1,300 percent annual interest on short term



loans of up to £1,000.

The firm's collapse comes a year after Wonga and Money Shop shut following a surge in claims and a crackdown on what payday lenders can charge.

With the charm the industry is known for accountant Grant Thornton, acting for Enova, says those with loans should carry on making repayments.

## 67 dead after protest at Nobel Peace Prize

**ETHIOPIA'S** prime minister Abiy Ahmed was recently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

So it was almost inevitable that, following in the footsteps of previous murderers who received it, last week saw a massacre in Ethiopia.

Some 67 people were killed in Oromia state during protests against Abiy and state-fuelled fighting between ethnic groups.

Amnesty International said that, since Abiy took office, there have been several

waves of mass arrests of people in Oromiya perceived to be opposed to the government.

Detainees were not charged or taken to court, Amnesty's Ethiopia researcher Fisseha Tekle said.



Abiy Ahmed

## HILLSBOROUGH

### Relatives of people who died give evidence

**PARENTS OF** victims of the 1989 Hillsborough football disaster gave evidence to the retrial of David Duckenfield last week.

Duckenfield denies 95 counts of gross negligence manslaughter relating to the disaster.

Some 96 Liverpool fans died after a crush built up in two pens at the Leppings Lane end of the Sheffield stadium.

Duckenfield cannot be tried in relation to the 96th victim, Tony Bland, as he died more than a year and a day after sustaining his injuries.

Trevor Hicks' two daughters Sarah and Victoria died as a result of the disaster.

He told the court that he noticed a problem in the central pens but that the police reaction "was one of containment, not



David Duckenfield

assistance".

Trevor described trying to tell police officers that fans were at risk, and being told to "shut your fucking prattle".

The jury heard evidence that the capacity of the Leppings Lane end was overestimated.

At the time of the disaster, it was said to safely accommodate 7,200 fans.

Expert engineer John Cutlack said he believed the figure should have been 5,426.

He agreed that correctly calculating the capacity was "fundamental" to crowd safety.

Judge Sir Peter Openshaw told the jury that they should not judge Duckenfield for his apparent lack of emotion. He said that Duckenfield's "appearance and demeanour" may be due to "post-traumatic stress disorder".

The trial continues.

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# Families left in torment after Essex lorry deaths

by TOMÁŠ TENGELY-EVANS

**VIETNAMESE FAMILIES** fear that their relatives were among the 39 refugees who died in a refrigerated truck in Essex last week.

Their torment came as British and European Union (EU) politicians joined calls for more border security that will force desperate people to take deadlier routes.

One Vietnamese family received a text from their daughter, Pham Thi Tra My, saying, "I can't breathe."

She sent it on Tuesday night of last week when the refrigerated container was being shipped from Zeebrugge in Belgium to Purfleet, Essex.

Pham Thi Tra My's family paid people smugglers £30,000 to transport her to Britain in the hope of a better life.

She travelled through China and France, but lost contact with her family.

Her final text read, "I'm sorry Mom. My path to abroad doesn't succeed. Mom, I love you so much! I'm dying bcoz I can't breathe...I am sorry, Mom."

Pham Thi Tra My's parents reported her missing. Police have not confirmed whether she is one of the 39 victims.

## Driver

British and Vietnamese authorities have responded to the horror with fake tears—and by going after suspected people smugglers.

Maurice "Mo" Robinson, the lorry driver, appeared in court on Monday on 39 counts of manslaughter, conspiracy to traffic people, conspiracy to assist unlawful immigration and money laundering.

Three other people who were arrested in connection with the deaths have been released on bail.

And Vietnamese media are reporting that authorities have arrested a



Pham Thi Tra My

A VIGIL held in London last week for the victims

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

and legal routes to Britain and Europe, they wouldn't be forced into the hands of organised criminals.

Every time politicians have ramped up border security, it has only forced people seeking a new life to use deadlier means (see pages 10&11).

Fear of being detected by thermal imaging and sniffer dogs means migrants and refugees use freezer vans.

Politicians have responded with calls for a tougher security in the wake of the Essex deaths.

On the BBC's Andrew Marr show Labour's shadow home secretary Diane Abbott called for a break from the "assumption that immigrants are a threat and migrants are always a problem".

But Abbott disgracefully said that

the solution was "thermal imaging" and "more border guards".

She said, "One of the things we are seeing is these smaller east coast ports are more vulnerable than Dover, for instance, which has a lot of very serious safeguards."

"So, one thing we should do is look at security in those smaller ports."

Meanwhile, the European parliament last week voted against search and rescue for refugees in the Mediterranean.

It was defeated by an alliance of conservative, racist populist and far right parties, including Nigel Farage's Brexit Party.

The Tories' four MEPs didn't vote, helping to defeat the motion. The only solution is to open the border and let people in safely.

## 10,000 attend climate rally

OVER 10,000 people joined Greta Thunberg in Vancouver, Canada, last Friday to march for climate justice.

Addressing the crowd from the Vancouver Art Gallery steps, Thunberg said the movement had to be a "constant reminder" to the rich and powerful.

"We will rise to the challenge, hold those responsible for this crisis and make world leaders act."

"And if you feel threatened by that, then I have some very bad news for you."

"This is just the beginning. We will continue because change is coming, whether you like it or not," she said.

At the rally, a group of young people announced that



Greta Thunberg in Vancouver

they are suing the Canadian government for failing to act on climate catastrophe.

Their court challenge calls on the government to reduce greenhouse gases and to "do its fair share to stabilise the climate system, and avert the catastrophic consequences".

In Britain, school strikers are planning to join in with the next global strike day on 29 November.

Coordinators the UK Schools Climate Network said, they would be "back with a bang" soon.

"The climate crisis isn't slowing down so neither are we. See you on the streets," it said.

## Socialist Worker Appeal to raise £125,000

Socialist Worker is the voice of people fighting for a better world. It dispels the racist scapegoating and anti-working class rhetoric of the mainstream press.

We publish stories of the strikes, protests and pickets that can beat back the bosses and bigots. We are asking everyone who enjoys Socialist Worker to donate as much as they can and help fund the resistance.

### I SUPPORT THE APPEAL BECAUSE...

*Socialist Worker has always supported postal workers in their struggles with the employer and government. It has shown solidarity with workers in dispute here and across the world. In the era of fake news and the rise of the populist right and fascists,*

*Socialist Worker newspaper and social media cut through the spin. It arms workers and activists with the facts that unite workers and campaigns across Britain and internationally.*

**Jane Loftus —**  
CWU national president (pc)



Jane Loftus

**To donate go to [socialistworker.co.uk/appeal](https://socialistworker.co.uk/appeal)**

Call 020 7840 5607 or send a cheque, payable to 'SW Appeal' to PO Box 74955, London E16 9EJ

£125,000

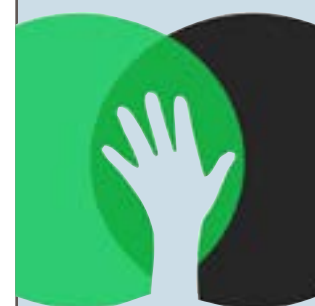
£100,000

**Total so far  
£79,085**

£50,000

£25,000

## JOIN THE SCHOOL CLIMATE STRIKE



**Fri 29 November**  
For details go to [ukscn.org/events](https://ukscn.org/events)





# Johnson gears up for campaign of Brexit, cuts and attacks

**BORIS JOHNSON** was floundering and spinning his way towards a general election as **Socialist Worker** went to press.

The serial liar who had promised to “die in a ditch” rather than apply for an extension to the Brexit deadline had applied and secured just such an extension.

And yet he remained infuriatingly alive.

Johnson said Britain would leave the European Union (EU) on 31 October “do or die” and “come what may” and “no ifs or buts” and “whatever happens”. But as Halloween came we were still firmly in the EU.

Johnson claimed his central task was to “get Brexit done”. But this week, despite winning a vote in principle to approve it, he abandoned the Withdrawal Agreement Bill.

Johnson had promised that he would ensure “the highest possible standards” for workers’ rights and environmental regulations after Brexit.

But a paper presented to ministers and leaked last weekend showed this was baseless.

It said there was room to force down regulations and rip up workers’ rights under the terms of the Johnson deal. That’s the real prize that the Tories seek—in the EU or not.

## Fakery

Johnson hopes to use fakery about standing up for democracy in order to win an election.

He didn’t actually want to pass his Brexit bill because he wants an election that focuses on this and not other issues.

It is much easier to froth about the way parliament and judges have, he says, stopped him from delivering the verdict of the 2016 referendum than it is to talk about life after Brexit.

But Johnson’s lies won’t just be about Brexit.

## BACK STORY

**Boris Johnson is struggling to “get Brexit done”**

●His Withdrawal Agreement Bill is largely the same as Theresa May’s discredited deal

●Johnson has been forced to ask the EU for an extension to Brexit

●This is despite promising that Britain would leave this week “come what may”

●So the EU has agreed Britain can leave as late as 31 January, unless a deal is done earlier

He will say the Tories are pouring money onto the NHS. Another lie. A month ago he promised the “biggest hospital building programme in a generation” with £13 billion worth of funding for 40 new hospitals.

The plan quickly turned out to amount to £2.7 billion to refurbish six hospitals over the next five years.

The other 34 hospitals would only be completed in the second half of the next decade.

Johnson said he wants the best education for every child. But cuts have made that impossible.

He visited Middleton primary school in Milton Keynes last week. Even after the recently announced “funding boost”, that school will still be £353,000 worse off in real terms than it was in 2015.

Johnson has claimed that he only became interested in politics because a “bearded Marxist student” asked him to contribute to a collection for the miners’ strike in 1984.

Like much else that’s probably a lie. But he was and remains a class warrior for the bosses and the rich.

The Tories have ordered the melting down of the 50p coins minted to commemorate Brexit.

Now it’s time to melt down Johnson and the Tories.



MIDDLETON PRIMARY School students endure Boris Johnson

Picture: PA

## Corbyn calls for election, despite pressure from Labour right wing

**THE ROW** over whether or not Labour should back a general election showed how much power right wing MPs still have in their party.

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn officially backed an general election on Tuesday of this week. He promised “the most ambitious and radical campaign for real change our country has ever seen”.

But MPs had been “furiously lobbying” shadow chancellor John McDonnell to stop Corbyn from backing one, according to the New Statesman magazine.

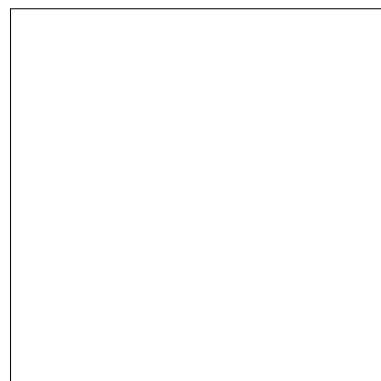
Some of those MPs want to stop Corbyn from becoming prime minister at all costs.

Others think that delaying an election until Labour backs remaining in the EU is more important than getting rid of the Tories.

And some simply don’t believe Labour could win.

All of them essentially decided they would rather leave Boris Johnson in place.

Prominent pro-Corbyn voices



Ready to fight

have become increasingly exasperated. Matt Zarb-Cousin—who was once Corbyn’s press officer—tweeted, “Our members need to be up for a fight but our shadow cabinet is running from the battle.”

He added, “I am annoyed the leadership is still—4 years into this project—apparently still terrified of the PLP.” For all of his leadership, MPs have threatened to bring Corbyn down.

Labour members can try

and get rid of MPs through a convoluted “reselection” process—but this isn’t easy.

Right wing candidates beat the left in over half of the reselection battles that took place last weekend. On Monday Margaret Hodge, who has pandered to racist ideas, was reselected to run again in Barking.

But even left wing MPs are unreliable.

Their focus on parliamentary games and crass electioneering means appealing to the most conservative elements in society. And MPs are nearly always to the right of Labour’s members.

Their pessimism infects the rest of the party.

McDonnell now also apparently believes Labour can’t win an election without backing Remain.

And many party members now also worry about Labour’s chances. That pessimism is a rot that’s spread too far through the Labour Party—and it started with the MPs at its heart.

It need to be pushed aside.



Homeless deaths have risen sharply under Tory rule

## A decade of disaster for working class people

### Food banks

●The number of emergency food parcels given out at food banks across Britain shot up by 73 percent in the five years to 2018-19.

●The Trussell Trust charity said it gave out 1,583,668 parcels, compared to 913,138 in 2013-14.

●It said the 12 months to March this year was the “busiest year for food banks” in its network.

### Jobs

●In September last year there were 17 percent fewer public sector jobs than there were in September 2009, when the figure stood at nearly 6.5 million. This is a drop of 1.1 million.

●In March 2018 the public sector represented 16.5 percent of the total workforce.

It’s the smallest share since comparable records began in 1999.

### Pay

●Pay freezes, caps and real terms cuts have left public sector workers thousands of pounds worse off.

●Paramedics suffered real terms pay cuts of over £6,000 between 2010 and 2016, according to the TUC.

Teachers lost more than £4,400 while firefighters have seen their pay drop by £4,770.

### Services

●Councils in England have slashed spending

on local services by over a fifth since 2010.

●The Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) reported in July that these services are “at the back of the queue” for public funding.

It found that money going to neighbourhood services across Britain fell by 27 percent in the nine years from 2009-10.

### Social care

●Some of the most vulnerable people have suffered the harshest cuts. Social care includes help for older or disabled people at home with things such as washing, taking medication or getting around.

●In 2017-18 local authorities in England spent nearly a billion less on social care than in 2010-11. And because more and more people need support, the figure should be going up, not down.

●The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) warned in May that an ageing population will mean councils in England have to spend more on adult social care.

It said the 3 percent cap on annual council tax rises means adult social care would need 60 percent of local tax revenues within 15 years. It currently takes an average of 38 percent.

### Schools

●Real terms government funding on schools and colleges dropped by

around £7.7 billion between 2011-12 and 2017-19, according to the Commons Library.

●16,523 schools, 83 percent of the total, will have less money per pupil in 2020 in real terms than they had in 2015.

### Homelessness

●The number of deaths of homeless people in England and Wales went up by a record 22 percent last year.

●An estimated 726 people died in 2018—nearly two every day—according to the Office for National Statistics.

●It said the increase was the biggest since it began recording homeless deaths six years ago.

### Child poverty

●The number of children living in absolute poverty rose by half a million between 2010-11 and 2017-18, the End Child Poverty charity found.

It said that in some areas, more than half of children are in poverty.

### Poverty

●More than four million people in Britain—7 percent of the population—are trapped in deep poverty, according to the Social Metrics Commission.

This means their income is at least 50 percent below the official poverty line.

●Nearly half of all those living below the poverty line live in a household where someone is disabled.

## Socialist Worker WHAT WE THINK

# BALLOT BOX IS CHANCE TO SMASH BREXIT DEADLOCK

**F**OR MORE than two years official politics has been consumed by a seemingly endless Brexit crisis and Westminster game-playing. A general election is a chance to change all of that.

Socialist Worker calls for a vote for Jeremy Corbyn and Labour across Britain.

Brexit is the deepest political crisis in Britain for 150 years. At times the natural party of the ruling class—the Tory party—has looked as if it would tear itself apart.

Yet for most people it’s been immensely boring. The ins and outs of arcane parliamentary procedure are designed to be incomprehensible to most people.

It all bolsters the idea that politics is just for specialists—MPs, their helpers, and the media who spend their lives watching them.

It’s no wonder that trying to play this game has done nothing to help Labour in opinion polls.

As Socialist Worker went to press, polls suggested that on average Labour was 10 percentage points behind the Tories.

Labour activists rightly point out that a general election campaign could change everything. Remember that the 2017 general

election was the Tories’ idea too. With Labour well behind in the polls, the Tories thought an election would be easy.

Instead Labour robbed the Tories of their majority in parliament. Labour MPs went from trying to get rid of Corbyn to—briefly—singing his name.

Pundits who had predicted that Labour would be smashed had to admit they’d got it all wrong. General elections have the potential to transform politics.

Suddenly the focus is no longer on what politicians get up to in Westminster. Instead they have to try and talk about what matters to ordinary people.

And—in a very limited—way

“**Labour’s 2017 campaign was about breaking from austerity, racism and war**”

## AVENGE THEIR DEATHS

**W**E HAVE to make the Tories pay for the thousands of people who have been killed by their rule.

The horrific deaths of 39 people in the back of a refrigerated lorry last week was only the latest example.

Many other refugees and migrants have suffered at the hands of Britain’s racist immigration system, whether at the border or because they were denied health treatment. The Essex deaths came just before an

interim inquiry report into the Grenfell Tower fire, where at least 72 people died in 2017.

People were put into unsafe housing. And the Tory government and council had repeatedly dismissed residents’ concerns over fire safety in the run-up to the blaze.

The deaths were symbolic of a system run for the rich—and that treats working class people and their lives with contempt. During the last decade of Tory rule more than 120,000 people’s “preventable

deaths” have been linked to austerity.

The Essex deaths, Grenfell and austerity are all reasons to kick out the Tories and hope for a Labour government.

But Johnson being turfed out of office won’t be punishment enough. Our anger has to run deeper than voting at a general election.

We have to fight for a complete break from the capitalist system, and build a society where the rich no longer have wealth and power.

**Breakfast in**

Sign up to our morning newsletter Breakfast in Red and get the latest news every day.

For updates and analysis on the stories that matter go to [socialistworker.co.uk/breakfastinred](https://socialistworker.co.uk/breakfastinred)



## ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



## Cuban lessons for Latin America's left

**LATIN AMERICA** has returned to the headlines with the explosive revolts in Chile and Ecuador. They show how neoliberalism continues to evoke massive popular resistance.

This was one of the themes of the International Socialism journal's conference on Latin America last Saturday. It also explored how earlier revolts gave rise to the "Pink Tide"—left wing governments that took office right across the continent.

But the Pink Tide has been receding. In Brazil, where the Labour-type Workers Party had held office since 2002, a constitutional coup removed president Dilma Rousseff in 2016. Her predecessor, Inacio Lula da Silva, was jailed and then far right demagogue Jair Bolsonaro was elected.

Speakers traced the roots of this reversal. Andy Brown argued that none of the left governments sought a real break with capitalism, making them vulnerable to the right playing on mass disillusionment.

Claudia Feres Faria suggested Bolsonaro's assault on democracy was an attempt to remove the barriers to a new "uncontrolled predatory capitalism". But as Mario Nain pointed out, the most powerful model for the left in Latin America is provided by the Cuban Revolution of 1958-9. So we were very lucky to have Frank Garcia Hernandez speaking at the conference.

Frank is a Cuban sociologist and historian who earlier this year organised a historic conference on Leon Trotsky in the island's capital Havana.

Because of the close links between the Cuban regime and Stalinist Russia, Trotsky hasn't had much of a look-in in Cuba. But Frank is pioneering a reassessment of Marxism in Cuba.

Frank talked about the changes that have been taking place in Cuba as a result of the efforts to open up the economy. When Barack Obama was US president, he pursued a policy of reconciliation with Cuba. The island had been subjected to a US economic blockade since the very early years of the revolution.

### Blockade

Frank argued that the economic opening is allowing a new bourgeoisie to develop—not just economically, but culturally and ideologically. As a result, Cuba is witnessing the re-emergence of class struggle in new forms. Ironically, Donald Trump, by re-imposing the blockade, is slowing the process down.

I spoke with Frank. I stressed the sheer heroism of Fidel Castro and his comrades in the 26 July Movement (M-26-7) in waging an armed struggle against the brutal dictatorship of Fulgencia Batista. I also talked about the new research in Steve Cushion's Hidden History of the Cuban Revolution.

This shows that organised workers played an important role, above all in the general strike called by Castro on 1 January 1959. This ensured the triumph of the revolution.

But I argued that Cushion's findings didn't invalidate the arguments made by Tony Cliff, founder of what is now the Socialist Workers Party. He argued the Cuban revolution was a case of what he called "deflected permanent revolution".

Trotsky first formulated the theory of permanent revolution. He saw that capitalism is a global system that imposes itself on every country. And because of this even struggles for basic democratic rights tend to develop in a socialist direction when under working class leadership.

Cliff asked, "What happens when the working class doesn't lead the struggle?" Then a radical nationalist section of the middle class can win power and break with imperialism—but not with capitalism.

This is what happened in Cuba. Workers supported the revolution, but it was the revolutionary nationalists of the M-26-7 who took power in 1959.

They later fused with the Stalinist Communist Party. The revolution's most heroic figure, Che Guevara, as minister of industry in the early 1960s started to construct a centralised state capitalist economy.

If this argument is correct, the Cuban Revolution is definitely an inspiration, but it can't be a model. I don't think Frank agreed. But the issues we were discussing are important for a Latin American left struggling with great hopes and fears.



MONTHLY SILENT walks take place calling for justice over Grenfell

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

# Blame Tory cost-cutting and racism for Grenfell Tower fire

by GABBY THORPE

**THE INQUIRY into the Grenfell Tower fire should be a chance to expose cost-cutting, institutional racism and the way profit comes before people.**

And it should be a pathway to justice and an opportunity to bring the guilty Tories and bosses to account.

The first phase of the inquiry's report was set to be published on Wednesday.

This interim report into the fire, which killed at least 72 people in June 2017, is looking into its causes and the authorities' response.

A leak to the Daily Telegraph newspaper on Tuesday revealed that the report condemns the response of the London Fire Brigade. Inquiry chair Sir Martin Moore-Bick blamed it for "systematic shortcomings".

### Cladding

The report was expected to state that the fire spread so rapidly because of the west London tower block's combustible aluminium cladding.

This had been added to the building during refurbishment in 2015-16.

But leaks largely focus on the response of firefighters and the emergency service call centres.

They say that both fire fighters and call centre workers were ill-prepared for the

fire, and that more training is needed for handling incidents in tower blocks.

Moyra Samuels, spokesperson for the Justice4Grenfell campaign, told Socialist Worker, "Especially in the case of call centre workers, the report recognises a lack of training."

"It also speaks to cuts made to the fire services."

The report focuses heavily on the "stay put" policy—which meant that residents were told to stay in their flats for up to two hours.

The advice was withdrawn.



Moyra Samuels of the Justice4Grenfell campaign

But Moore-Bick said more lives could have been saved had it been withdrawn earlier.

The stay put policy is an important issue. But focusing on that doesn't explain why such a fire happened or why intensely flammable cladding was used with no proper regard for safety.

### Rescued

Jon Wharnsby, a firefighter who rescued people in Grenfell, said, "There have been thousands of high-rise fires in London and there has been one Grenfell."

"The difference between those fires is not the fire service. The only difference is that that building was refurbished in a specific way."

The stay put policy, designed to stop the fire from spreading outside of the flat of origin, was put in place before the cladding was installed.

Moyra said the report's conclusions expose government failings to listen to past warnings about the policy (see left).

"The report shows that no lessons were learnt—particularly from the Lakanal fire in 2009," she said. "There is no accountability—and that is what is important now for the campaign."

For there to be justice for survivors and their relatives, the government must take responsibility.

## Stay put fears ignored

**THE LONDON Fire Brigade requested advice on the "stay put" policy after the Lakanal House fire, which killed six people and injured 20 in south London on 3 July 2009.**

**The government issued new guidelines in 2014 on how the policy**

**should be implemented. But it ignored requests made by the coroner and the fire brigade to launch a review into**

**policy. At the same time, firefighters called for new national guidelines on what to do when the policy failed.**

**These requests were also ignored.**

**Sir Martin Moore-Bick's report should not be used to scapegoat firefighters for failing to**

**correctly deal with stay put at Grenfell.**

**We should demand the the government instantly launches a review into the policy.**

Martin Moore-Bick

# Violent offensive hasn't stopped Iraq movement

**PROTESTERS IN Iraq have defied violent attacks to stay on the streets against unemployment, poverty and corruption.**

Iraqi security forces killed as many as 67 people during protests on Friday and Saturday of last week.

At least 52 of those were killed on Friday—and more than 6,000 wounded—as security forces and militias shot at protesters with live ammunition.

Demonstrators in the capital city Baghdad had tried to storm the Green Zone—the heavily fortified area that houses government buildings and is shut off to ordinary people.

Protests also took in cities across southern Iraq, where at least 30 demonstrators were killed.

Iraqi president Adil Abdul Mahdi ordered counter-terrorism soldiers onto the streets to quash protests following Friday's demonstrations.

The Reuters news agency says they were told to “use all necessary measures” to end the protests.

The government also extended a curfew across Baghdad and much of southern Iraq.

Yet hundreds of thousands of people defied the crackdown and took to the streets for a second day of demonstrations.

Soldiers took control of checkpoints in neighbourhoods surrounding Baghdad's Tahrir Square—the focus for mass rallies in the capital.

Security forces fired tear gas into the crowds in the square during the day—but failed to clear it.

Protesters distributed masks and homemade remedies to protect themselves from the tear gas.

Others handed out food and water.

In the southern city of Nasiriya—where protesters have torched government buildings—soldiers broke up demonstrations with beatings and arrests.

## Prosecuted

And in Basra police said protesters would be prosecuted under counter-terrorism laws.

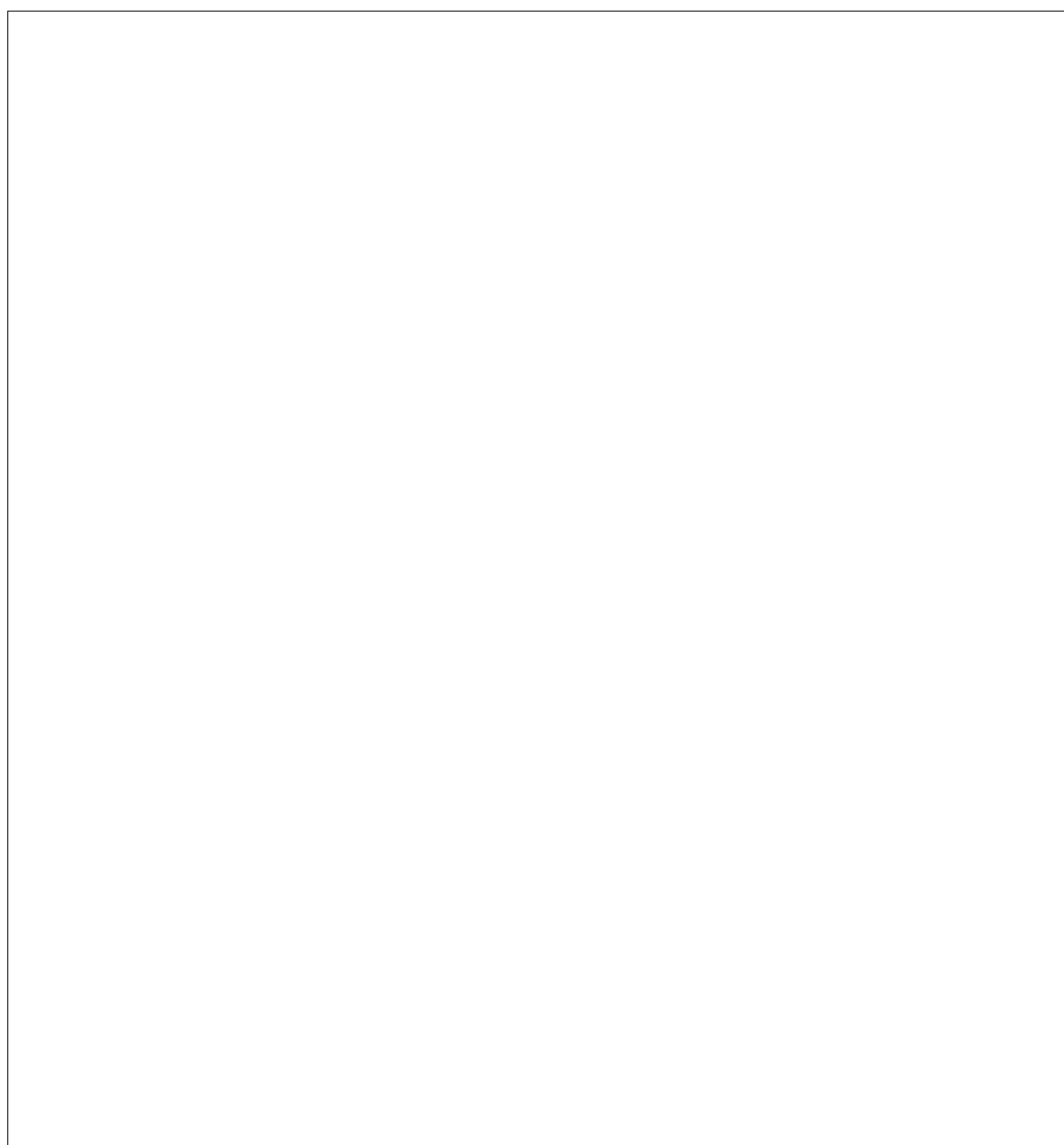
The protests were the latest in a wave of mass demonstrations that have swept Iraq since the beginning of October.

Some 190 people have been killed since protests began. The revolt has also forced Abdul Mahdi to promise limited reforms.

Yet his promises won't satisfy the overwhelmingly young demonstrators.

They are raging at the corrupt and sectarian government system imposed on Iraq by the US after it invaded in 2003 and overthrew the government of Saddam Hussain.

The government has become controlled by politicians backed by either the US or Iran, who are



**TAKING REFUGE** behind a barricade in Baghdad

vying for control of Iraq and its oil industry.

Meanwhile, despite Iraq's vast oil revenues, ordinary people suffer high unemployment and low wages.

Around seven million Iraqis live below the poverty line, according to the World Bank, and youth unemployment is at 25 percent.

One protester said, “The government has been stealing from us for 15 years. Saddam went and 1,000 Saddams have been hiding in the Green Zone.”

Another said, “We're here to bring down the whole government, to weed them all out.

“We want to bring down the regime.”

And another said, simply, “This is not a protest—this is a revolution.”



## On other pages...

'I could've been one of the 39 who died' >Pages 10&11

## Murderers gloat over Isis

**US PRESIDENT Donald Trump gloated after the alleged killing of Isis leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi on Sunday.**

Trump said the apparent killing—carried out by US forces in northern Syria—meant the “world is now a much safer place”.

And British prime minister Boris Johnson said it was “an important moment in our fight against terror”.

Yet the horror and misery that gave rise to Isis has only got worse.

Isis grew in an Iraqi society smashed by the US's invasion in 2003. It spread across Syria thanks to a civil war

that was caused by dictator Bashar al-Assad's counter-revolution. And it was fuelled by competing powers who piled in with military “support” for various armed groups.

The US used the war against Isis to try and take control of Syrian territory.

And last week Trump said US soldiers would stay in Syria to take control of Syria's oil fields—keeping them out of the hands of Assad and his supporter, Russia.

It means that although Isis is all-but defeated for the moment, the imperial conflict tearing Syria apart could unleash new, worse horrors.

## A human chain in Lebanon

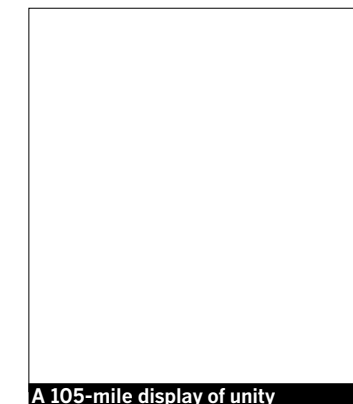
MASS demonstrations across Lebanon have entered their second week—with protesters refusing to give up roadblocks in cities across the country.

Demonstrators there want an end to mass youth unemployment, poverty—and the fall of the government.

In an impressive display, protesters formed a giant human chain along a 105-mile highway, running from Tyre in the south to Tripoli in the north.

The action was designed to show how the mass revolt has united people across religious and regional divides.

Protesters accuse Lebanon's ruling politicians of enriching



**A 105-mile display of unity**

themselves while trying to make ordinary people pay for the country's economic crisis.

The Lebanese government—led by Western-backed prime minister Saad Hariri—is in “deadlock” after its proposed “reforms” failed to end the protests.

The government hoped plans such as privatising the country's telecoms industry would encourage investment by foreign donors.

## Champions

The International Monetary Fund—which champions privatisation and austerity across the globe—called for the reforms to be implemented “urgently”.

But protesters refused to give up their roadblocks—and though the demonstrations have been largely peaceful, they could soon face stronger state repression.

Soldiers in Tripoli in northern Lebanon opened fire on one roadblock on Friday.

And supporters of the Hizbollah movement—part of the governing coalition—attacked protesters in the capital Beirut.

“We're not going anywhere,” said protester Fay Abu Hassan.

“They can bring dogs, cops and we're not going to get off the street.”



## UNITED STATES

## Car strike ends with dodgy deal

A STRIKE by nearly 50,000 General Motors (GM) workers ended last Friday, as the UAW union ratified a new contract with the firm.

The strike lasted for nearly six weeks and cost GM bosses £1 billion.

The new deal will see pay rises for all workers. And it



One strike ends...

will—eventually—eliminate the two-tier pay system.

Under the current system newer workers earn up to £10 an hour less than those who have been there for over four years. However, newer workers will still not get pensions or health insurance.

And plants in Ohio, Baltimore and Michigan are still set to close.

Some 57 percent of the 41,000 workers who voted on the contract approved it, although doubts have been raised about the reliability of the voting figures.

Many workers are unhappy with the deal. One worker



...Another ploughs on

in Detroit said, “GM are still sticking it to the little guy—just in a fancier way.”

Meanwhile a strike by Chicago teachers is coming to the end of its second week.

Some 30,000 members of the Chicago Teachers Union have walked out over lack of support staff and “trauma workers”—nurses and counsellors—in schools.

The teachers have been offered a 14 percent pay rise, but have said that they will not return until conditions for students improve.

# Over one million ‘rise up’ on the streets of Chile

by GABBY THORPE

**OVER A million people took to the streets of Chile’s capital Santiago last weekend.**

Demonstrators are demanding the resignation of president Sebastian Pinera and the implementation of a new constitution.

The protests have already forced Pinera to sack his cabinet—and he says that he will restructure the government to “confront demands”.

He said he hoped the protests will “open hopeful new paths into the future”.

But Pinera has not outlined any plans to make significant changes. And the protests are not likely to stop.

A poll published by Chilean research institute Cadem, showed that 80 percent of Chileans did not think that reforms would go far enough.

Pinera declared a state of emergency when demonstrations started over metro fare increases. The scale of the revolt against the fare rise forced the government to scrap it.

But the protests quickly generalised—and have faced fierce repression.

Police and soldiers attacked the protests with tear gas. At least 470 people have been shot, and 19 people have died during protests across the country.

## Deaths

Five of those deaths have been confirmed to have been caused by armed forces. The number of those injured could be much higher.

Izka Siches, president of the Chilean Medical Association, said, “There is a substantial under-reporting of the injured and also a lack of counselling for many victims to denounce the violation of their rights.”

She demanded that the full number of those injured be released.

United Nations human rights investigators were set to arrive in Chile on Tuesday of this week to look into the violence against demonstrators.

Speaking in London last



A Mapuche protester in Santiago



JUST PART of the huge mobilisation in Santiago, Chile, last week

weekend, Chilean revolutionary socialist Mario Nain said, “What’s happening at the moment can be called an insurrection.”

“The great majority of people have risen up.

“When the mass protests began, president Sebastian Pinera sent tanks and the military onto the streets to defend the privileges of the elite.

“But people have had enough, and it’s about a lot more than the government’s increase in transport fares.

“Pensioners receive just £48 a month and some are eating food out of bins. There have been astronomical price rises for basic goods and consequently spiralling debt.

“Two months ago there were big strikes by teachers and supermarket workers.

“But it didn’t lead to the current explosion. Then young people led a struggle over ticket prices and it did.

“There’s such hope, but we need revolutionary organisation to make the most of it and not to trust the traditional left forces.

“We need to move from challenging a particular leader to challenging the capitalist state system.”



## More online

‘An insurrection against neoliberalism’ [bit.ly/Mario-Nain](https://bit.ly/Mario-Nain)

## GUINEA

# Foul corruption sparks angry demonstrations

**HUGE CROWDS** of demonstrators flooded the streets of Guinea’s capital, Conakry, last week.

The protests focus on a potential constitutional change that could let president Alpha Conde seek a third term of office in the west African country.

Organisers said a million people took part in a march last Thursday. Police put the number at 30,000, while local media said there were hundreds of thousands of people.

Demonstrators’ anger is also about corruption and discontent with a leader whose victory in 2010 had raised hopes for change after years of military rule.

As one protester said, “Our country has the largest bauxite mines in the world. We have gold, diamonds and yet the people don’t get anything.”

“The government takes all the resources of the mining and the population gets poorer and poorer. They don’t have



Raging against Alpha Conde

even food, school, or access to health.”

Bauxite is the ore that is made into aluminium.

Guinea has a powerful working class. A five-day general strike in 2016 won major concessions.

The current wave of demonstrations began on 14 October.

At least nine people were killed when police opened fire on protesters as they ransacked military posts and blocked roads in Conakry with burning tyres.



## Rebellion isn't over

TAKING PART in the International Rebellion was an inspirational experience.

People couldn't wait to hear about it at work, especially the dozen or so who had joined the 20 September global climate strike just a few weeks before.

It has raised much discussion about the politics and tactics that are now needed to take the climate movement forward.

Let's keep exploring ways to bring the energy and inventiveness of the new environment movement into our unions and workplaces.

Mike Killian  
Manchester

■ We're proposing a raft of measures that Camden Council should undertake to address the climate emergency.

We want to set up a staff assembly on the climate emergency and get services to promise to reduce their carbon footprint.

And we're calling on the council to divest pension funds from the fossil fuel industry.

Other demands include the integration of climate change reduction targets into all job roles and a car free week every month across the borough.

Our presentation to the council was really well received from the public gallery and has generated a serious discussion about what can be done in the borough.

Initiatives like this can help to build the next student strike on 29 November.

Liz Wheatley  
Camden Unison union (pc)



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

## We hope our strike at Beis encourages others to fight

AFTER BEING on indefinite strike since the middle of July, I and the other cleaners at the department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Beis) finally have our victory.

We've made our employer—outsourcing company ISS—pay us the London Living Wage as well as much improved overtime, holiday and sick pay.

Our colleagues—caterers who work for the outsourcer Aramark—won the same battle at the start of the month. Now we're happy we've got our deal too.

When the company messed up our pay dates earlier this year, it felt as if we had no choice. People were crying—they couldn't pay for

childcare, couldn't pay the bills. The PCS union saw there was a big problem and the word got out that the union was helping us.

The union really helped keeping us together. Walking out indefinitely made a big difference. The fact that the company was doing the same thing to workers in other workplaces meant we felt entitled to walk out.

As the strike went on, people from security, post room and reception joined us. There were so many of us—and we had so much support from the civil servants in the building.

The fact that we all stuck together and carried on meant that we won the strike. We hope

we've encouraged other people in the future—people who are outsourced, or people on zero hours contracts.

These days there are outsourcing companies everywhere. And there's a disparity between these companies and the workers. Usually people are low paid and have to work all the hours they can.

But at some point people get fed up with these companies that take them for granted.

We've shown that you can do something about it. And we're going to keep going until we get rid of outsourcing.

Ronan  
Cleaner at Beis

## Stop the rise of LGBT+ attacks and violence

IT IS hard to ignore the weekly reports of hate crime against LGBT+ people. The growing rise of animosity and hatred towards us is almost tangible.

And as an LGBT+ person, it begins to consume you with anxiety and fear.

The recent report by Galop, the LGBT+ anti-violence charity, revealed that one in ten people think LGBT+ people are "dangerous". On the surface the legal

victories and rise in popularity of events such as Pride creates the illusion that Britain is safe for LGBT+ people.

What is yet to be addressed is how world leaders such as Donald Trump and Boris Johnson inspire a confidence in the far right and those who seek to erase marginalised groups.

We must fight back and make all streets safe spaces for all LGBT+ people.

Elizabeth Adofo  
South London

## More emphasis on 'Kurdish revolution'

SOCIALIST Worker highlights well the historic fight of the Kurdish people against oppression in Kurds—a history of agony (Socialist Worker, 23 October).

However, I think the role of the Kurdish revolution could have been emphasised more.

Ordinary workers in Rojava have created an autonomous region based on direct democracy, environmental protection, and gender and ethnic equality.

Cooperatives have been established. This needs to



Flying the flag for Kurdistan

be more widely known. Their revolution has seen Kurds start to create a new kind of society.

The Kurds have fought with success against Isis fascism. Women fight

alongside men as equals. Turkey needs to get out of the region. We need to condemn the treachery of the US, as well.

Graeme Kent  
Telford

Just a thought...

## Which Trump is which?

TRUMP KEEPS saying he's under assault by "witchhunts". One thing for sure, he doesn't know which witch is which.

Nigel Coward  
West London

## Was it right to disrupt tube?

WHAT ABOUT the nurses, firefighters and such going or coming from work? They're stuck there if Extinction Rebellion hold up the tube, the whole line is—all 27 stops.

Kevin Attwood  
On Facebook

■ PROTEST, TO have any significant impact, invariably involves conflict. That's what makes it memorable.

It's interesting that people who quote the Suffragettes decry any direct or violent action. Solidarity with Extinction Rebellion.

Philip Woodfield  
On Facebook

## Break from middle class

I READ your column on the middle class with interest.

You can have a big organisation of working class people led by middle class people or with working class people full of middle class ideas. The question for socialists is how you break working class people from middle class ideas or leaders.

Tony Horne  
On Facebook

## Look at fight outside EU

THE CHOICE for socialists isn't between Donald Trump or the European Union.

We should look to the struggles that are taking place and the demands for change expressed in the massive response to Jeremy Corbyn's election campaign in 2017.

Tony Tingle  
On Facebook

## Unite the fight to win

LET'S COMBINE the Chicago teachers going on strike and the postal workers' strike. We will defeat the capitalists—we have the power.

Julio Rodriguez  
On Facebook



# ‘I COULD’VE BEEN ONE OF THE 39 WHO DIED’

The deaths of 39 people last week shone a light on the horrendous reality of Britain’s racist border policies. **Tomáš Tengely-Evans** and **Gabby Thorpe** look at how government clampdowns across Europe have made deaths more likely

**T**HE HORRIFIC deaths of 39 people found in the back of a lorry in Essex last week brought back terrible memories for many refugees.

Gabir, a refugee from Sudan, told Socialist Worker that everyone who is forced to use the method is “faced with death”. He came to Britain in the back of a refrigerated lorry in 2016.

“You can’t do anything when you’re inside,” he said. “You could bang for the whole day and no one would hear you.

“I was there alone for six bloody, nail-biting hours among the ice cream. There is hardly any oxygen. You’re in a huge fridge. I lost feeling in the lower half of my body—I could barely move.”

The 39 people who died came in the lorry to the port of Purfleet from Zeebrugge in Belgium at around 12.30am last Wednesday. Ambulance workers discovered their bodies a few hours later at an industrial estate in Thurrock, Essex.

As soon as Ahmad al-Rashid, a Kurdish refugee from Syria, saw the news it “brought a picture of my own experience to mind”.

He made the perilous journey to Britain in the back of a refrigerated truck in 2015. “I saw the suffering and the horror,” he told Socialist Worker. “You are surrounded by



Tory Priti Patel cries crocodile tears

“**Smugglers are small gangsters—the real criminals are sitting in parliament**

death. Everything you smell is death. “You find yourself locked in back of the truck with frozen chickens and you think, ‘What is happening?’”

Gabir described trying to “hold on to life” while “images of people at my funeral” flashed before his eyes. “Every three minutes feels like three hours when you’re stuck in the back,” he said.

When Gabir’s mobile phone showed that he was in Britain, he called the emergency services who tracked down the lorry. He was in an ambulance for 40 minutes before he regained the use of his lower body.

Gabir said he’s “lucky” because he didn’t have to rely on people smugglers to get him onto a truck. He said, “I moved with my friend from Calais to Bologne where we found this parked lorry going to Britain. He said it was my turn to try and make it.

“He opened the door for me, then locked it from the outside.

I had to try very hard not to make any noise, to stay calm until the driver wanted to start his engine.”

Ahmed relied on smugglers he met on Facebook to get him from Syria to Turkey and across Europe. “It was a 55-day journey of land, air and sea,” he said. “I got to Greece on the back of a dinghy.

“Then on a Bulgarian fake passport I went to Marseille in France. In Calais I was chasing cars, and

smugglers put me in the back of lorries a couple of times.”

Tory politicians and the press are grandstanding over people smugglers. Police have raided three properties in Northern Ireland as part of the investigation into the Essex deaths.

The National Crime Agency (NCA)—which has some responsibility for border security—is working to establish if “organised crime” was involved. And there have been reports of police investigating a possible Irish smuggling ring.

But people smugglers are small gangsters—the real criminals are in parliament. If refugees could come here freely, there would be no need to turn to people smugglers. But immigration policies have made it ever harder for people to travel safely.

Refugees turned to refrigerated trucks after governments began to use thermal imaging technology to detect them. Every crackdown pushes people towards more dangerous methods.

Harsher laws don’t deter refugees because the reasons people move—war, poverty, climate chaos—remain. But they do make deaths more likely.

As Ahmad said, “The issue of smugglers needs to be tackled, but trying to address the problem’s causes is key.

“People don’t want to leave homes and loved ones, but they are desperate.”

Since the beginning of the “refugee

crisis” in 2015, European states have tried to close off routes.

In 2015 the European Union and Turkey signed a deal that made it easier to deport Syrian refugees who made it Greece.

This made it harder to travel across the Aegean Sea, forcing them to take the longer route across from North Africa across the Mediterranean.

In war-torn Libya—destroyed by Western bombing and civil war—refugees have faced slave camps and torture. Gabir said, “When I was in Libya, there were people buying and selling people.

“Someone would say, ‘I’ll help you get across but only if you do this job.”

Across northern France and Belgium, hundreds of refugees live in makeshift settlements.

Tory home secretary Priti Patel and French interior minister Christophe Castaner agreed a plan to increase border security in the English Channel last month. They deployed more British and French patrol boats, and increased surveillance on land.

And French police evicted and levelled the largest refugee settlements in Calais and Dunkirk last month.

The Anglo-French deal was drawn up in response to an increase in refugees trying to make it across the channel in boats. Some ask why refugees don’t stay in France, rather than try and come to Britain. But those higher



A POLICE e-fit of a man who fell thousands of feet from a Kenyan Airlines flight to London. His frozen body landed in a backyard in Clapham, south London



## Tougher laws will only bring more tragedies

THE 39 deaths last week are racist murder. And the Tory politicians, whose immigration policies force refugees to take dangerous routes and push them into the hands of people smugglers are guilty.

Now politicians and the press want even harsher controls. And it isn’t only Tories.

Shadow home secretary Diane Abbott last week spoke to BBC Radio 4’s Today programme about the deaths. She didn’t start by blasting the racist policies that caused them. Instead she said the solution is to make it even harder for people to come here.

“The first step is to look at security at those smaller east coast ports,” she said. “The second step is to look at international cooperation.”

“If we come out of the EU we’d lose access to European arrest warrants, we’d lose access to important databases around crime and missing persons.”

It’s a disgraceful response. The EU’s goal of creating Fortress Europe has seen it pour tens of millions of pounds into keeping refugees out.

Both Labour and the Tories have a long history of implementing racist immigration policies that have horrific consequences for refugees.

In 2000 the bodies of 58 Chinese migrants were found in a lorry at the port of Dover. A post-mortem showed that they had died of asphyxiation. Two people survived because more oxygen became available as others died.

“**Tony Blair’s government cracked down on those who made it into Britain**



Labour’s Diane Abbott

But instead of making it safer for refugees to travel, Tony Blair’s Labour government increased security checks for vehicles. And they cracked down on those people who made it to Britain.

In 2004, 23 Chinese cockle pickers died in Morecambe Bay when the tide came in. They had come in search of a better life, but instead faced brutal exploitation as undocumented migrants.

In July this year an African man fell 3,500 feet from the undercarriage of a Kenyan Airways flight into a garden in Clapham, south London.

He was forced to endure a severe lack of oxygen and temperatures as low as -60 degrees.

Calls for tighter security were instantly taken up. Little was said by the government or the media about what would drive a person to stow away in a plane.

In August this year an Iraqi man died trying to swim across the English Channel. Just days later, British and French authorities met to ramp up border security, condemning more to take dangerous routes.

Boris Johnson called the deaths last week an “unimaginable tragedy”. In fact they are entirely predictable—and government policies are responsible.

### WHY DO PEOPLE FLEE?

**Ahmad from Syria**

“I BASICALLY had a normal life going to university in Aleppo in Syria. Then there is no water and no electricity, and the town becomes a battlefield between the opposition and the government.

“So people are stuck between a rock and a hard place.

“I left Syria in early 2013 and went to Iraqi Kurdistan in the north of the country.

“I was in Mosul and thought I would be safe there and then there was the Isis massacre of the Yazidis.

“So I decided to return to Syria but I couldn’t, so I crossed to Turkey and then to Europe.”



Ahmad escaped to London from fighting in Syria

**Gabir from Sudan**

“WHEN I came here, there was no safety in Sudan.

“If you had any political views that are different to the military government, you would be thrown directly into prison and no one would know.

“There was corruption everywhere.

“And my part of the country, Darfur, was a very bloody region—people have been raped in front of their families by militias.

“I moved for safety for myself and my family who have now joined me.”

numbers were being driven by police intimidation and violence.

Gabir said, “If you’re outside the situation, if you haven’t had to cross a border, it can seem like a very difficult thing to do. But when you have no options, you do whatever you need to do.”

Ahmad said, “People do not want to leave homes. People don’t choose death. You do not walk to death. You are forced to. There is a reason why people are taking horrendous journeys.”

Both Gabir and Ahmad have been given papers to remain in Britain. But many more face the humiliating process of applying for asylum seeker status.

It sets people up to fail and leaves them living in poverty with the threat of deportation hanging over their heads. Had the 39 survived, the same politicians and pundits calling it a tragedy now would scapegoat them as “scroungers”.

Across the world refugees are fleeing war, poverty and dictatorship—often caused by Western government policies—in search of a better life.

Anti-racists have to fight to dismantle the British state’s racist immigration system and for the right of people to come to Britain safely—and stay.

Gabir is a pseudonym



## WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

### INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

### REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

### THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

### INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

### THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to [www.swp.org.uk](http://www.swp.org.uk) or phone 020 7840 5602 for more information

## { SOCIALIST WORKER } PUBLIC MEETINGS

### BRIGHTON & HOVE

**Booklaunch—System Change not Climate Change**  
Thu 7 Nov, 7.30pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
Ship St,  
BN1 1AF

### COLCHESTER

**Booklaunch—System Change not Climate Change**  
Thu 28 Nov, 8pm,  
Oyster Room, Hythe  
Community Centre,  
1 Ventura Drive,  
CO1 2FG

### KENT

**Booklaunch—System Change not Climate Change**  
Thu 14 Nov,  
7.30pm,  
Nucleus Arts Centre  
(Conference Room),  
272 High St,  
Chatham,  
ME4 4BP

### LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST

**Booklaunch—System Change not Climate Change**  
Wed 20 Nov,  
7.30pm,  
William Morris  
Community Centre,  
6-8 Greenleaf Rd,  
Walthamstow,  
E17 6QQ

### PLYMOUTH

**Booklaunch—System Change not Climate Change**  
Thu 7 Nov, 7pm,  
Quaker House,  
74 Mutley Plain,  
PL4 6LF

## { SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

### ABERDEEN

**Can Marxism explain the current economic crisis?**  
Mon 4 Nov, 6pm,  
The Snug, Ma Cameron's,  
6-8 Little Belmont St,  
AB10 1JG

### BIRMINGHAM

**Gandhi, non-violence and civil disobedience**  
Wed 6 Nov, 7pm,  
The Church at Carrs Lane,  
Carrs Ln,  
B4 7SX

**BRISTOL**  
**The global revolt—workers of the world unite**  
Thu 7 Nov, 7.30pm,  
YHA, 14 Narrow Quay,  
BS1 4QA

**BURNLEY AND PENDLE**  
**Hong Kong, mass protests and the working class**  
Wed 6 Nov, 7.30pm,  
Red Triangle Cafe,  
160 St James's St,  
BB11 1NR

### CAMBRIDGE

**Why capitalism needs borders**  
Thu 7 Nov, 7.30pm,  
River Lane Centre,  
River Lane,  
CB5 8HP



KURDISH FORCES in Syria (above) Donald Trump (below, right)

# Trump, Turkey, the Kurds' struggle and imperialism

### CARDIFF

Wed 6 Nov, 7.30pm,  
Cathays Community Centre,  
Cathays Terrace,  
CF24 4HX

### EDINBURGH

Wed 6 Nov, 7.30pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
7 Victoria St,  
EH1 2JL

### CHESTERFIELD

**Gandhi, civil disobedience and the end of the Raj**

Thu 7 Nov, 7pm,  
Chesterfield Library,  
New Beetwell St,  
S40 1QN

### DERBY

**Why is the Russian Revolution still important?**  
Thu 7 Nov, 7pm,  
West End Community Centre,  
Mackworth Rd,  
DE22 3BL

### DUNDEE

**The case for the revolutionary party**  
Wed 6 Nov, 7.30pm,  
Dundee Voluntary Action,  
10 Constitution Rd,  
DD1 1LL

### HUDDERSFIELD

**Automation—are robots taking all our jobs?**  
Wed 6 Nov, 6.30pm,  
Brian Jackson House,  
2 New North Parade,  
HD1 5JP

### GLASGOW

Thu 7 Nov, 7pm,  
Avant Garde,  
33-44 King St,  
Merchant City, G1 5QT

### LONDON: NEWHAM

Wed 6 Nov, 7pm,  
Stratford Advice Arcade,  
107-109 The Grove (next to  
Morrisons car park), E15 1H

**LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE**  
**Anarchism vs socialism— which way forward?**

Thu 7 Nov, 7pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
Meeting House Ln,  
LA1 1TX

**LEEDS: CITY CENTRE**  
**Revolution and the state**

Thu 7 Nov, 7pm,  
The Swarthmore  
Education Centre,  
2-7 Woodhouse Square,  
LS3 1AD

### LIVERPOOL

**Is the media all powerful?**  
Thu 7 Nov, 7pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
22 School Ln,  
L1 3BT

### LONDON: HACKNEY

**Lebanon, Egypt, Libya—the return of the Arab Spring?**  
Thu 7 Nov, 7.30pm,  
The Round Chapel,  
2 Powerscroft Rd,  
E5 0PU

### MANCHESTER: CENTRAL

Wed 6 Nov, 7pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
6 Mount St,  
M2 5NS

### OXFORD

Thu 7 Nov, 7pm,  
Restore Building,  
Manzil Way,  
OX4 1YH



### LONDON: HARINGEY

**What's the alternative to capitalism?**  
Wed 6 Nov, 7.30pm,  
St John Vianney Church Hall,  
386 West Green Rd, N15 3QH

### LONDON: ISLINGTON

**Will Labour's green new deal save the planet?**

Thu 7 Nov, 7pm,  
Elizabeth House,  
2 Hurlock St,  
Highbury, N5 1ED

### LONDON: KINGSTON

**Capitalism and the politics of food**  
Thu 7 Nov, 6pm,  
Room JG3003,  
Penrhyn Road Campus,  
Kingston University, KT1 2EE

### LONDON: SOUTH

**Gandhi, non-violence and civil disobedience**  
Wed 6 Nov, 7pm,  
Vida Walsh Centre,  
2b Saltoun Rd  
Brixton,  
SW2 1EP

**LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST**  
**Can peaceful methods change a violent world?**

Wed 6 Nov, 7.30pm,  
William Morris  
Community Centre,  
6-8 Greenleaf Rd, E17 6QQ

**LONDON: WEST & NORTH WEST**  
**Why schools fail our children**

Thu 7 Nov, 7.30pm,  
Woodlane Community Centre,  
78 White City Cl,  
Shepherd's Bush, W12 7DZ

### NEWCASTLE

**Catalonia, independence and repression**  
Wed 6 Nov, 7pm,  
Floor 2, Commercial  
Union House,  
39 Pilgrim St,  
NE1 6QE

### NORWICH

**Why capitalism needs borders**  
Wed 6 Nov, 7.30pm,  
Vauxhall Centre,  
Johnson Place,  
NR2 2SA

### PORTSMOUTH

**Corbyn vs the establishment**  
Wed 6 Nov, 7.30pm,  
Somerstown  
Community Centre,  
River's St,  
PO5 4EZ

### SCARBOROUGH

**More than opium— Marxism and religion**  
Wed 6 Nov, 7.30pm,  
Tap and Spile,  
94 Falsgrave Rd,  
YO12 5AZ

### SHEFFIELD: CITY CENTRE

**Why the working class is still the most revolutionary class**  
Thu 7 Nov, 7pm,  
Central United  
Reformed Church,  
60 Norfolk St (near  
Crucible Theatre),  
S1 2JB

### SWANSEA

**Corbyn vs the establishment**  
Thu 7 Nov, 7.30pm,  
Brynmill Community Centre,  
St Albans Rd,  
SA2 0BP

### TELFORD

**Migration and climate change**  
Wed 13 Nov, 7.30pm,  
The Roy Fletcher Centre,  
17 Cross Hill,  
SY1 1JE

### WOLVERHAMPTON

**AND WALSALL**  
**Rosa Luxemburg— reform or revolution**

Wed 6 Nov, 7.15pm,  
Light House,  
Suite 16, Chubb Bldg,  
Fryer St,  
WV1 1HT

### YORK

**What is LGBT+ oppression and how can we fight it?**

Wed 6 Nov, 7.30pm,  
Sea Horse Hotel,  
4 Fawcett St,  
YO10 4AH

## { MOVEMENT EVENTS }

### DORCHESTER

**Which way forward for Extinction Rebellion?**

Sat 9 Nov, 1.30pm,  
Colliton Club,  
Colliton Park,  
DT1 1XJ  
Organised by Dorset Socialists

### GLASGOW

**Marxism in Scotland 2019: Ideas to Change the World**

Sat 9 Nov, 10am,  
Renfield St Stephens Centre,  
260 Bath St, G2 4JP  
[bit.ly/MarxismScotland2019](http://bit.ly/MarxismScotland2019)  
far right • System change not climate change • #MeToo: challenging sexism and the system • Palestine, revolution in North Africa & imperialism  
There will be a free, professionally-run creche. Advance booking essential. Please contact [swpscotland@gmail.com](mailto:swpscotland@gmail.com) to register for the creche.

### NATIONAL

**Campaign against Climate Change national meeting and AGM**

Sat 2 Nov, 10am  
UCL, Gower Street, London,  
WC1E 6BT  
Register online  
[bit.ly/CaCCAGM](http://bit.ly/CaCCAGM)

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# Magic of His Dark Materials is finally done well on screen

It's the adaptation that lovers of Philip Pullman's trilogy have been waiting for—and you don't need to read the books to enjoy it, writes **Gabby Thorpe**

**THE HIS Dark Materials trilogy may finally be getting the screen adaptation it deserves.**

There are probably very few literature lovers in Britain who have not read, or at least know about, Philip Pullman's fantasy novels.

They take place in an alternative Oxford.

Here people's souls take the physical form of daemons—which appear as animals—and the whole world is powered by a mysterious substance called Dust.

The story follows Lyra and her daemon Pantalaimon as they go on an adventure to save their friend Rodger from "The Gobblers" who kidnapped him.

The books are an allegory for religious oppression, and though aimed at young adults have found enormous appeal with readers of all ages.

## Special

So when a film adaptation of the first novel came out in 2007, it was sad to see so much of what made them special was left out.

This new BBC television series instantly feels more faithful to Pullman's creation.

The adaptation will cover the trilogy over three series, meaning that unlike the film it will have room to explore everything that happens in the books.

From the start, the series explores how the theocratic society that Lyra is living in is at odds with scientific discovery.

Her uncle Asriel is on the run from the Magisterium—a heavily oppressive religious government.

His discovery of Dust is considered dangerous by the Magisterium. And



**COLD HEARTED Asriel (above). Lyra (left) steals the show**

Lyra wants nothing more than for Asriel to take her with him.

The writing and acting are both promisingly strong. James McAvoy plays a convincingly cold hearted Lord Asriel—but it's Dafne Keen's Lyra that steals the show.

The series makes much more of an effort than the film to capture her longing for freedom.

What begins to unfold is a sense of adventure that isn't necessarily cheery.

The feeling that something sinister is unfolding hangs in the air. Even

those who have read the books will find themselves gripped.

The only downfall is the quality of the CGI special effects.

While the whole show captures so brilliantly the world of Lyra's Oxford, the daemons sometimes look a little unnatural.

But with such a captivating story that's easy enough to overlook.

Whether you've read the books or are experiencing this story for the first time, you're in for a treat.

Starts on Sunday 3 November, 8pm, BBC1

## Story of an outstanding cyclist that needs to be told

### THEATRE

#### BERYL

At the Arcola theatre, London, until 16 Nov. Tickets from £15

**BERYL BURTON** deserves far more attention.

That's true, and it's the point of departure for Maxine Peake's play about the all-conquering cyclist.

Burton is the most successful British cyclist of all time.

But she's relegated to a footnote in the history books when compared to male cyclists such as Bradley Wiggins,

Mark Cavendish or Tom Simpson.

Burton won two world road race championships, dozens of world track cycling championships and national competitions.

She was rated the best female all-round time trialist—racing against the clock—in Britain 25 years in a row.

And Burton held the female 12-hour record for 50 years—a record that held against male competitors for two years as well.

Simply competing across such a wide variety



Record winner Beryl Burton

of disciplines at the highest level is rare. To compete and win so many times is outstanding.

This play is a well-deserved corrective to the silence surrounding Burton's glittering career.

A sort of documentary piece of theatre, it delivers on laughs. There are all the sharp one-liners and observations you'd expect from the playwright Peake.

The play also brings out the fierce determination that set Burton on the path to incredible success despite poverty and the advice of doctors.

Where the play falls is its restlessness. Is it a documentary, a comedy or an examination of the desperate depths people plumb to achieve remarkable exploits?

It's a worthy celebration of a remarkable sportsperson.

Yet the choice of attempting to tackle Burton's entire life in an hour-and-a-half play gives the whole thing a breathless sense of a story not fully told.

It's a story that needs to be told nevertheless.

**Alistair Farrow**

### EXHIBITION

#### GREENHAM WOMEN EVERYWHERE

On tour until 10 Dec. Go to [greenhamwomeneverywhere.co.uk](http://greenhamwomeneverywhere.co.uk) for details

THIS EXHIBITION showcases some original photographs, and also archival material, both visual and written, by people involved in the Greenham Common peace camp.

All set in a Greenham-inspired tent, this exhibition really allows you to get an intimate look at the sights and sounds of the camp.



Action at Greenham Common

### THEATRE

#### EARTHQUAKES IN LONDON

Bristol Old Vic, 7–16 Nov  
Tickets from £15

MEET THREE very different sisters—Jasmine, a rebellious teenager, Freya, a troubled pregnant woman, and Sarah, a passionate cabinet minister.

While the sisters navigate personal and political issues, their scientist father predicts apocalyptic climate change.

Sweeping back and forth through time from the 1960s to 2525, Mike Bartlett's ambitious play focusing on climate change revels in its excess, lurching from hope to despair.

### What's on at BOOKMARKS the socialist bookshop

#### Mohandas Gandhi—Experiments in Civil Disobedience

With author Talat Ahmed  
Friday 15 November, 6.30pm



1 Bloomsbury Street,  
London WC1B 3QE  
020 7637 1848  
[bookmarksbookshop.co.uk](http://bookmarksbookshop.co.uk)



**A**N inspiring wave of revolts is posing a serious challenge to the “business as usual” of capitalism.

It also exposes the lie that we can’t seriously challenge the system. In recent weeks, mass demonstrations have taken place in Lebanon, Chile, Hong Kong, Haiti, Ecuador, Iraq, Sudan and Catalonia.

Each revolt had a spark. In Chile, it was a rise in the cost of metro fares, and in Haiti it was shortages and corruption. Protesters in Ecuador were fighting an austerity package while those in Iraq took on poverty and corruption.

What’s interesting is how many protests have quickly developed into movements demanding much more far-reaching changes.

In Haiti, the fight against the government is drawing in new forces, which is producing arguments about how the movement can win.

In Haiti, thousands of Catholics held an anti-government march through the capital Port-au-Prince on Thursday of last week. A spokesperson for the Haitian Conference of Religious said, “Can we advance with the current political regime and this system in place? We should build anew.”

But other protesters rallied against the mobilisation, and argued that militant direct action was necessary.

In Hong Kong, protests are into their 21st week. They began in opposition to a law that would allow extraditions to mainland China. Now, people want the fall of the government, more democracy, and the disbanding of the police force.

In Lebanon, huge protests began over a planned tax on WhatsApp calls. Within days protesters were chanting, “Revolution, Revolution.”

Why does there seem to be such an eruption of struggle now and why does it feel so militant?

### Waves

The protests haven’t come out of nowhere. In Haiti, there have been waves of protest since president Jovenel Moise took office in 2017. They initially called on Moise to fix things—now they want him to resign.

And in Hong Kong demands for more democracy aren’t new—the 2014 Umbrella movement occupied streets to call for it.

In many places the current explosions are the latest phase in a longer term struggle.

Revolts keep bursting out because the system can’t deliver what people want.

They come after a decade of austerity, political turmoil and economic instability following the financial crash of 2007-8. The impact has been



CELEBRATING IN Ecuador after protests force the government to abandon its austerity plans

# EXPLORING A WORLD IN REBELLION

With huge anti-government movements erupting across the globe, **Sadie Robinson** looks their root causes—and how these struggles have the potential to win



Cops attack in Chile

horrific. Across the Middle East and North Africa, youth unemployment rates have been the highest in the world for over 25 years. They reached 30 percent in 2017.

Over two thirds of people in Algeria are under 30. More than one in four of them were unemployed in the first quarter of last year.

In Algeria, protests earlier this year were sparked by the decision of president Abdelaziz Bouteflika to seek a fifth term



**Involvement from workers is what can drive movements forward**

in office. But there is also deep bitterness at youth unemployment that has been simmering for years.

Economic crisis and austerity has meant harsh wage cuts, more unemployment, attacks on services and benefits, and lower pensions.

Although not on the same scale, actions such as by the Yellow Vest movement in France or general strikes in Greece are more signs of the anger. The impact of austerity

isn’t the same everywhere. But the attacks have fed a general discontent with the system. On top of that, growing awareness of climate change means wider layers of people feel that the system isn’t working.

The current wave of revolts isn’t a blip that can be easily overcome.

The revolutions of 2011 were a product of a long-term revolutionary process caused by the crisis and instability of the region. The latest uprisings are part of that process—and more revolts are likely until radical change sweeps the region.

**T**HE revolts are rooted in the inherently unstable nature of the system. The revolutionary Karl Marx explained how capitalism repeatedly goes into crisis.

Economic slumps feed political crises. Imperialist wars add to the instability. And pressure on profits encourages bosses to attack workers.

There are waves of resistance because the factors behind them are generalised—and what happens in one place affects things elsewhere.

Today there is a general economic and political crisis—not just in one country but across the globe.

This means there is more anger and bitterness at the system, and less faith in the people at the top.

At such times, protests can quickly develop to become a challenge to the system. And seeing struggle erupt in one place can make people elsewhere more confident to fight.

This is what happened during the 2011 Arab Spring. Protests began in Tunisia in December 2010 over unemployment and high prices. They became a revolution that within a month had forced out dictator Ben Ali, who had ruled for 23 years.

The Tunisian uprising sparked a revolution in Egypt, where people had suffered repression and hardship for 30 years under dictator Hosni Mubarak. He was gone in 18 days.

The Egyptian revolution then led to more uprisings—in Libya, Bahrain, Yemen and Syria.

Similar waves of struggle have taken place throughout history.

In 1968 movements for black power and women’s rights combined with the anti-Vietnam war movement, student revolts and workers’ strikes.

There were mass strikes and protests in France, riots in the US, the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia and civil rights battles in Ireland.

The First World War ended with revolution in Russia.

There was widespread anger at the hardships that people had endured during the war, and a determination to get change.

Revolutionary situations and revolts broke out across the globe in the years that followed.

Capitalism is a volatile system that encourages struggle. But

we can’t just sit back and wait for the revolution.

Discontent with the way things are can be pulled in a right wing direction. The election of Donald Trump in the US, Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil and big votes for far right parties across Europe are worrying signs.

And anger at the system doesn’t mean that people will automatically fight back.

Workers create wealth under capitalism and have immense potential power.

But the system makes us feel powerless and alienated. This also makes people more vulnerable to ruling class ideas.

So how can we encourage struggles that can win?

Some people fighting today have learnt some lessons from the Arab Spring.

Changing a few faces at the top isn’t enough to transform society. Instead there needs to be a confrontation with the ruling class and the states that protect them.

But brutal counter-revolutions against the Arab Spring, backed by Western powers, have shown what our rulers will do to try and crush resistance.

In order to win a different kind of system, we have to be prepared to take them on. It can seem impossible when faced with the might of armies, militarised cops and the like.

But ordinary people far outnumber the rulers and their backers. And workers have the power to shut down their system.

**W**orkers have played an important role in the recent revolts. There have been general strikes in Chile, Catalonia and Sudan, and workers have also struck in Hong Kong.

More involvement of workers self-consciously as organised workers is what can drive these movements forward.

In each of these movements, there are tensions between different classes. And, in every movement there are arguments about tactics.

Reformists try to steer revolts into a safer direction that keeps the system intact. Some argue that workers should leave things to “experts”.

Yet revolt has the most chance of success if it’s based on workers acting for themselves – and it refuses to compromise with the old ways. In Sudan



Catalan protesters block roads during their general strike (top) Braving the tear gas and stun grenades in Iraq (below)

the Sudanese Professionals Association, made up of independent unions, has helped to develop the movement there.

In Algeria, a general strike pushed the movement forward. In Egypt, workers’ strikes were key to forcing out Mubarak.

And in Chile last week a two-day general strike saw workers from the country’s main trade union, CUT and 20 other groups. The powerful Copper Workers Federation joined the strike and workers from each region of the Codelco, the state-owned mine, joined in.

Workers have the numbers and the skills to overthrow capitalism and organise a socialist society.

Building up revolutionary organisations that can fight for this can make a crucial difference in the struggles.

### MORE ONLINE

● **Sudan—a history of mass revolt** by Charlie Kimber [bit.ly/SudanSW](http://bit.ly/SudanSW)

● **A history of oppression and revolt in Haiti** by Gabby Thorpe [bit.ly/HaitiSW](http://bit.ly/HaitiSW)

● **Understanding the dynamics of the uprisings in Sudan and Algeria** by Anne Alexander [bit.ly/ISJAlexander](http://bit.ly/ISJAlexander)



## Could demonstrations mark new phase of revolution?

People are becoming frustrated at the lack of change, reports **Charlie Kimber**



BACK ON the streets in Khartoum

THREE MONTHS after a deal seemed to end the inspiring revolt in Sudan, protesters are back on the streets.

The Sudanese movement for democracy and social justice began in December 2018.

It saw courageous mass protests, general strikes and weeks of sit-ins across several cities.

It forced the military to remove dictator Omar al-Bashir, who had ruled for 30 years, and won other concessions.

But it did not completely transform the political order or bring fundamental change in people’s living conditions.

A rotten agreement in August saw “power-sharing” between the Transitional Military Council (TMC), which took over after Bashir was overthrown, and the pro-democracy movement.

A sovereign council—comprising six civilian and five military members—oversees the government.

The council is led by lieutenant general Abdel Fattah al-Burham, who headed the TMC.

His Rapid Support Forces (RSF) carried out a massacre of 120 pro-democracy activists in June this year.

People took to the streets in the capital Khartoum and several other Sudanese cities last week.

They are frustrated at the slow pace of change—and demand the complete dismantling of the former regime.

### Spearhead

The rallies were organised by the Sudanese Professionals Association, the spearhead of the protests this year.

They also commemorated the 55th anniversary of the first popular uprising against a military regime in 1964.

The demonstrators did not call for the overthrow of the transitional government. Most people still hope that it can be made better.

But they called for it to fully implement the demands of the revolution, including the dissolution of the former ruling National Congress Party (NCP).

Demonstrators chanted slogans such as, “Blood for blood”, and, “The people want to take revenge for the martyrs.”

They condemned the government’s decision to not ban the NCP, and called to disband it and to confiscate its premises and assets.

People are bringing together big political issues and immediate concerns linked to the old order.

Doctors at the Nyal Teaching Hospital struck last week in protest against a recent attack by members of the RSF on a doctor and pharmacist.

In El Fasher, capital of North Darfur, hundreds of teachers held a protest last week.

They demanded the payment of salary arrears and the removal of “symbols of the former regime” from the education ministry.



**They marched to demand the complete dismantling of the old regime**

They also want the dissolution of the previous pro-regime fake trade unions.

People living in the city of Atbara in River Nile state are calling for action over bread shortages.

They accuse the owners of the bakeries and affiliates of the former regime of manipulating the flour quotas.

Atbara is where the revolt against Bashir began nearly a year ago. Having achieved some change, many people are recognising that they need to go further.

### Contradictions

Writing about the 1848 revolutions in France, Karl Marx wrote that the February rising was “the nice revolution, the revolution of universal sympathies, because the contradictions which erupted in it were still undeveloped, because the social struggle which formed their background had only achieved an existence in phrases, in words.”

But a revolt in June, headed by workers and the poor, was “the ugly revolution, the nasty revolution, because the phrases have given place to the real thing”.

In every revolution there is a moment where people either accept half-reforms and trust “better” politicians to produce real change—or fight for transformation themselves.

In Sudan there is a battle over whether a new phase of revolution will begin.



# Walkouts set to hit 25 sixth form colleges

by SADIE ROBINSON

**WORKERS AT 25 sixth form colleges were set to strike on 5 November—the second walkout in a battle over pay and funding.**

NEU union members held a buoyant day of strikes on 17 October.

Many strikers were driven by fury at how funding cuts are hitting the most vulnerable students. They also said real terms pay cuts have made it harder to get by.

Luisa at Saint Francis Xavier sixth form college in south London said cuts could put entire institutions at risk. “We’ve had quite a lot of classes shut down,” she told Socialist Worker.

“It has a knock-on effect, because if students can’t do a course here they will go elsewhere.”

Striker Roschelle added, “Sixth forms should be for everyone. We feel like we’re being ignored.”

Pickets held placards reading, “Striking for smaller class sizes,” and, “Striking for a better work-life balance.”

As Louisa put it, “We’re



**STRIKERS MARCHING** to the Department for Education during their first strike day

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

asked to do extra things such as promote enrichment activities, but there is no time to do that.

“All my classes are above what the maximum size should be.”

Fleur from Brighton’s Varndean sixth form college told Socialist Worker, “A majority of staff are part time, doing full time hours. It means you have cuts in pay but also your pension too.”

“We don’t do this job for the money. But we just want conditions to be better for students.”

The threat of strikes saw workers offered an increase on their 1 percent pay

offer—to 1.5 percent. And the government in September pledged an extra £400 million for 16-19 education.

But none of this comes close to making up for the real terms cuts that workers

and the sector have suffered. Future strikes that could involve more workers can pile on more pressure.

The NEU is rebalancing members at 16 sixth forms where the turnout in the first ballot failed to reach the 50 percent threshold for legal strikes.

## Reballots

The reballots end on 4 November—and branches that reach the turnout could join a third walkout planned for 20 November.

NEU joint general secretary Kevin Courtney promised that the campaign would continue if there is a general election.

Duncan Blackie, a union rep at Longley Park Sixth Form College in Sheffield, said, “It’s important that Kevin Courtney said we won’t stop for a general election.

“But the pressure will be on if a general election is called.

“It’s important that we do carry on. A lot of people feel now that conditions in sixth forms are getting beyond a joke. We need to hold the union to the strike dates.”

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# Revealed—Royal Mail recruits scabs in effort to break strike

Postal workers are gearing up for national strikes. Meanwhile their bosses are scheming to hit their walkouts in November by bringing in an army of strikebreakers, writes Nick Clark

**BOSSES AT Royal Mail are recruiting a scab workforce of thousands to try and break a coming national strike.**

CWU union members have discovered adverts for more than 6,000 temporary Royal Mail jobs at workplaces right around the country. The jobs are advertised as temporary positions for delivery drivers and warehouse operatives.

They're part of a national recruitment drive—launched without the agreement of the union—following a massive strike vote by Royal Mail workers two weeks ago.

Mark Dolan, a CWU rep in north London told Socialist Worker, “This is a scab workforce. This is Royal Mail upping the ante.”

“What we see here are jobs advertised across the country. And I know in north London this has not been discussed with us—and certainly not agreed by us.”

The discovery comes as more than 110,000 workers in Royal Mail are preparing for their first national strike in a decade.

CWU members delivered a 97 percent vote in favour of strikes in a ballot that ended in mid-October. They're gearing up for what CWU general secretary Dave Ward has called “the fight of our lives”—a battle to stop bosses smashing Royal Mail to pieces.

A previous agreement between Royal Mail and the union means they now have to spend two weeks considering the outcome of talks with an external mediator.

But as the CWU's London division said, the scabbing operation is “proof that Royal Mail didn't want to reach an agreement.”

They added that the jobs are “not only to try and break any potential strike, but also a clear indication of their intention and long term aim to recruit an alternative, cheaper workforce to deliver parcels.”

There were attempts to recruit



POSTAL WORKER Keith Hamilton of CWU South Central Branch gets support from a neighbour

PICTURE: IAN MCKENDRICK

**Bosses want to break up the firm into a parcels delivery company run for profit and a letters department to be run down**

strikebreakers in the 2009 post strike. This was met with protests.

Chief executive Rico Back now wants to break up Royal Mail into a parcels delivery company run for profit, and a letters company that will be run down.

Packages would instead be delivered later in the day and sorted separately from letters in special automated parcels “hubs”.

Mark said the plan would “crucify jobs if they get away with it”.

It would mean taking vital work out of Royal Mail with new parcels delivery drivers employed on much worse pay and conditions.

He warned that the working hours

advertised for scab drivers—later than a usual delivery worker's shift—were a sign that bosses are already pushing ahead.

“Significantly these are advertised as 11am-7pm shifts. That's the alternative workforce delivering parcels in the afternoon,” he said.

Mark added that the move shows bosses aren't going to back down and make an agreement following the strike vote, as they did in a dispute that ended in 2018 without strikes.

Royal Mail workers will have to get ready to take hard-hitting action—and defeat whatever bosses do to try and break the strike, and we should all back them.

**They're not Xmas casuals**

**THE SCAB jobs** advertised by Royal Mail are not the same as Christmas casual positions usually advertised at this time of year.

These are designated as Christmas jobs, and are for sorting mail in the big offices. They are often recruited through agencies, and with the agreement of union officials.

The scab workforce is different. These aren't just for sorting office jobs, but packet deliveries in the afternoon. They are not agreed with the union.

And they're to be employed directly by Royal Mail—which union officials say could be an attempt to get around laws against using agency workers during strikes.

**Keep up the momentum**

**OFFICIAL strikes** are unlikely until the end of November.

The CWU is encouraging its members to speak to people about the reasons for the strike.

On Monday the union launched a CWU Supporters Network. It aims to create a “public army” to support campaigns.

The union has already received tens of thousands of messages of support via social media.

And workers report being invited to speak at meetings of other unions.

The news of the scab workforce should encourage even more trade unionists to get behind the dispute.

It could be the focus of a national demonstration that keeps up momentum.

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## IN BRIEF

**Join 'Stop the hate, educate' protest**

A PROTEST has been organised this Saturday to defend LGBT+ equality education.

Called by Stand Up to LGBTQ+ Hate Crime, it is advertised as a celebration of love, inclusion and diversity! The group said, "Please dress up and bring placards, musical instruments, banners, flags, umbrellas.

"No to homophobia, no to Islamophobia, no to transphobia."

●Demonstrate Sat 2 Nov, assemble 1pm, Downing Street

**Vote to take Tube bosses to cleaners**

CLEANERS ON the London Underground started voting on whether to stage walkouts from Monday of this week.

Over 2,000 workers are outsourced to contractor ABM and are fighting for parity with colleagues.

The cleaners, members of the RMT union, are demanding improved policies on pensions, sick pay and travel arrangements. The ballot closes on 19 November.

**BT workers hanging on for a jobs fight**

UNION REPS at telecoms giant BT have been told to prepare for industrial action if bosses try to force through compulsory redundancies.

The CWU union says that 367 workers could soon be told they are "at risk" of redundancy.

CWU assistant secretary Allan Eldred told a meeting of reps last week that "if there's one compulsory redundancy—just one—we'll take industrial action.

"As Dorothy said in the Wizard of Oz, we aren't in Kansas anymore Toto."

**No to more drilling for oil in Surrey**

DEMONSTRATORS rallied at Horse Hill near Horley, Surrey, last Saturday which could potentially become Britain's second largest onshore oil site.

Speakers denounced Surrey County Council's climate emergency, declared only two months ago, as a sham. It was followed by a decision to grant UK Oil and Gas permission to drill four more oil wells and extend oil production for 20 years.

**Richard Payne**

**More strikes set for the Foreign Office**

OUTSOURCED workers at the Foreign and Commonwealth office in central London are set to strike for four days from Thursday of next week.

The PCS union members—including maintenance workers and cleaners—are fighting a long-running battle over pay and union recognition.

## DEATHS IN CUSTODY



ON THE streets for justice (see right)

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

## HEALTH WORKERS

# A fight for dignity and respect at St Mary's

by PETER WOODWARD

CLEANERS, PORTERS and caterers from St Mary's hospital in west London began 15 days of strikes on Monday demanding equality with NHS staff.

The workers are members of the United Voices of the World (UVW) union and are presently employed by Sodexo.

Paulos said he was on strike for "dignity and respect".

Pay was important, but other things mattered as well.

He explained that workers didn't get the three sets of uniforms they were promised.

They were not even provided with changing facilities and were forced to change in unsuitable locations throughout the hospital at the beginning and end of shifts.

And finally—possibly the biggest insult—they were not even allowed to use the canteen. This is the canteen they are working in. Petros,



Patients and pickets united at St Mary's

PICTURE: PETROS ELIA

the UVW organiser, said there were cleaning and catering staff who have worked at St Mary's for 20 and, in one case, 32 years.

"These are permanent and essential jobs" he said.

Petros added that the hospital was swarming with management the night before the strike as bosses planned

their strikebreaking operation.

The strikers are in a great mood and gave loud cheers when union reps from Imperial College turned up to show solidarity.

Many bus drivers offered their support by tooting their horns as they passed by.

●Please send donations to [uvwunion.org.uk/strikefund](http://uvwunion.org.uk/strikefund)

## FAST FOOD WORKERS

## Strikes on menu at six McDonald's sites

MCDONALD'S fast food workers who are members of the Bakers Food and Allied Workers' union (Bfawu) are set to strike at six stores across London on 12 November.

Workers are demanding a wage of £15 an hour, as well as an end to "youth pay rates", and job security.

Melissa Evans, a worker at the Wandsworth Town store, said, "We are coming together to tackle poverty pay, insecurity of hours and lack of respect which has

gone on at McDonald's for too long."

The strike will take place as part of a global day of action for fast food workers' rights.

It will see action in countries including Brazil, Chile, France and Belgium.

Lewis Baker, a McStriker, from Crayford, who will go on strike for the fourth time said, "McDonald's can afford to pay us £15 an hour.

"It's a reasonable request for a corporation that earns millions every day.

But instead of listening to what we've been demanding, McDonald's has tried to dismiss us.

"McDonald's workers everywhere face the same issues of poverty pay, insecure hours and a lack of basic respect.

"We are growing bigger with every strike. It's time for McDonald's to give its workers a New Deal."

●The sites affected are Wandsworth Town, Downham, Balham, Deptford, Catford and Crayford—all in London

## United Families and Friends protest for justice

OVER 200 people joined the United Families and Friends march in central London last Saturday.

The annual march brought together relatives, friends and supporters of those who have died in police or state custody.

As people marched from Trafalgar Square to Downing Street, they chanted, "Six, six, six is the number of the beast—turn it around and you get the police."

Mohammed Yaqub told the rally that his son Yassar was "assassinated by police" when he "went out for a

meal" in West Yorkshire in January 2017. Yassar's parents delivered a letter to Boris Johnson demanding justice for their son.

Kadija is a cousin of Sheku Bayoh, a 31 year old man who died in police custody minutes after being restrained by police in Kirkcaldy in Scotland.

She told Socialist Worker that "there is still no resolution" to Sheku's case with "police still trying to get off".

"UFCF is supporting families across the country," she added.

## TAYSIDE

SCOTTISH pharmacy workers are hoping for victory in their long-running dispute.

The Unite union members at NHS Tayside have been on all-out strike over a "flawed job evaluation" since August.

The Scottish Terms and Conditions Committee held a job evaluation panel hearing last Thursday.

Workers hope for an NHS band 3 pay grade and compensation for loss of earnings during the last 12 years.

They have stayed on picket lines for 11 weeks, refusing to go back on promises of justice in the future. Halloween picket parties were set for Thursday this week.

●Go to Facebook event Halloween Picket Party for details

## LINCOLNSHIRE

HEALTH VISITORS in Lincolnshire are heading for further walkouts after an overwhelming vote to strike.

Unite union members voted by 67 percent to strike against the Tory-run council's "divide and rule tactics".

Around 50 health visitors staged 32 days of strikes since July to demand equal pay. They were transferred from the NHS to the council in October 2017—but did not receive a pay rise despite both NHS and local government pay deals.

They will be joined by other health visitors—who worked at the council all along—demanding the higher pay grade for all workers. They are currently split across the lower 9 and higher 10 grade.

## STAND UP TO RACISM



Campaigning at Ashton Gate last Sunday

## Kick out racists in Bristol

BRISTOL STAND Up To Racism had a great reception for our stall at Bristol City FC's Ashton Gate ground before the home match against Wigan last Sunday.

A small but vocal clique of far right racists had blighted a recent away match at Luton Town with racist chants—including chants for Tommy Robinson.

In the half hour before this Sunday's match, over 60 fans

signed a statement against racism at the club.

Many bought Stand Up to Racism badges to wear into the match and more than 1,500 leaflets were given out.

The most frequent comment we heard was, "These people don't care about football, they just want to spread racism".

A number of fans now want to organise further action to get rid of the racists.

**Lin Clark**



## MUSEUMS

# Strikes for fair pay at Science Museum

by NICK CLARK

**WORKERS AT Science Museums across England struck for a second time on Wednesday of last week in a battle over pay.**

The Prospect union members at museums in London, Manchester, Bradford, York and Wiltshire walked out to demand a living wage.

They took action to reject a paltry pay increase of just 1.5 percent. It would be the latest below-inflation “increase”—effectively a pay cut—since 2011.

They’re demanding at least the living wage of £9 an hour, or £10.55 an hour in London.

## Cheque

Luke Jackson was one of the strikers at the Science Museum in west London. He told Socialist Worker, “When you’re living on less than the London Living Wage you’re living pay cheque to pay cheque.

“I’m on £18,500 a year for a full time job. It’s not horrific, but it’s not enough for London and it’s not as much as wages at other museums.”

Bosses say they can’t afford to pay strikers the living wage—and that all their funding is already allocated.

Yet Science Museum



WORKERS JOIN the Science Museums’ strike in Bradford

PICTURES: NEIL TERRY

Group director Sir Ian Blatchford has had a 5 percent pay increase every year for the last five years—plus yearly bonuses of £20,000 or more.

And after just one strike by workers in September, bosses conceded they could pay a living wage next year—having first claimed they wouldn’t be able to for another four years.

Claire Hosell, another

striker in London, said, “Our directors get a bonus every year.

“For some of the staff here a director’s bonus is more than their salary—it’s incomprehensible.”

Strikers say bosses’ latest offer was to pay the lowest paid workers in line with rates set by the living wage foundation—but only for a year.

Luke said, “We’re feeling

confident because there’s been some concessions from management since last time.”

The strikers say they’re determined to keep fighting until bosses give them the pay rise they deserve.

■ **WORKERS AT the Museum of London also struck for half a day on Thursday of last week.**

They had rejected a 1.5 percent pay offer.

## EDUCATION

# Notts College workers get ready for more walkouts

UCU UNION members at Nottingham College were set to start a fresh wave of strikes next week in their battle over new contracts.

Workers have so far held 15 days of strikes that have won widespread support and seen more people join the union.

The union plans 14 more days of walkouts from Tuesday 5 November.

Workers are fighting the imposition of new contracts that would slash pay and holiday entitlement while removing protections on workload.

Talks have failed to resolve the dispute.

Some 32 Nottingham city councillors have written to the college criticising

the board’s handling of the dispute. It says teachers have tried to deliver a good level of education “despite increased workloads and cuts in funding”. But councillors have found a “staggering lack of trust” among workers towards management.

Some local Labour Parties have passed motions in support of the workers.

Workers plan to follow next week’s three-day strike with a four-day walkout the following week, then more dates throughout November.

Trade unionists should organise solidarity to support the Nottingham strikers.

● Strikes are planned for 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 20, 22, 25, 26, 28 and 29 November

## HIGHER EDUCATION

# University bosses braced for pay and pension strike

STRIKE BALLOTS of around 125,000 university lecturers end this week—and could see national walkouts called.

The UCU union is balloting workers at 147 universities over pay, workloads, casualisation and equality.

And at 69 of these, more than 52,000 workers are also balloting for strikes to defend their USS pension scheme.

A number of union branches have already reported that they have passed the 50 percent turnout threshold required for legal strikes. The ballots end on Wednesday of this week.

Higher education workers’ pay has dropped by 20 percent in real terms since 2009.

And the union says attacks on the USS pension scheme leave the average scheme

member £240,000 worse off.

Many UCU members are also furious at the gender pay gap and casualised contracts in universities.

The union’s national executive committee was set to meet on Friday of this week to discuss the ballot results and the next steps. It should call a series of hard-hitting strikes to drive back the bosses’ attacks.

● UCU in Transformation—One Year On, Building a democratic, activist-led UCU. A one-day conference called by London Region UCU and backed by the UCU Left group. Sat 2 Nov, 11am-5pm, University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT. To register go to [uculeft.org](http://uculeft.org)

## SCOTLAND

# Militant mobilisations can win Scottish referendum

>>>continued from page 20

who believe in the spirit of democracy should rise up and condemn the actions of the Spanish state and Spanish courts.”

He called on Pedro Sanchez, the leader of Labour-type party PSOE, “to take urgent action to release the prisoners”.

The protest heard accounts from Catalans about the police violence.

AUOB speaker Keir McKechnie applauded the workers who joined a recent general strike in Catalonia and those resisting repression.

Echoing the criticism now coming from SNP politicians he asked,

“Some people say the European Union represents democracy and human rights but why the silence on Catalonia?”

“What’s going on in Catalonia is a warning to us all.

“Whenever people fight for change, for radical transformation, the elites will do anything to try and stop us.

“That’s why it is important that the trade union movement, the left, the whole movement for social rights unite together behind the Catalan people.”

● Rally for Independence, Saturday 2 November, 1.30pm, George Square, Glasgow. Organised by The National newspaper

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

# Fight at libraries escalates

Library and museum workers battling against funding cuts in West Yorkshire were gearing up for a three-day walkout from Tuesday of next week.

It will mark the second round of strikes by Unite union members at Bradford’s 14 council-run libraries and museums.

Workers struck for two days at the beginning of the month and plan a four-day walkout from 18 November and a five-day one from 2 December.

Meanwhile, library workers in south east London began the 20th week of their all-out strike against job cuts.

Unite union members in the Tory-run borough of Bromley are fighting against subcontractor GLL’s plans to axe 35 percent of frontline jobs.

Trade unionists should raise money in their workplaces and union branches to help sustain the Bromley workers’ right.



A Bradford striker

■ Refuse collectors across Elmbridge and Surrey Heath are set to go on strike over pay and conditions next Tuesday and Wednesday.

The GMB union members plan further action on 19 and 20 November.

Workers are angry that Amey pays them on average 17 percent less than workers in some of the nearby boroughs.

They also get less sick pay and holiday entitlement.

Tim O’Dell

## SCHOOLS ROUND-UP

# School workers walk out against ‘culture of fear’

NEU UNION members at St Catherine’s Catholic School for Girls in Bexleyheath, south east London, were set to strike over bullying on Wednesday.

They say trade union meetings have been banned, and the NEU rep has been suspended “without good reason”.

NEU district secretary Debbie Jones said, “What was a very happy school has now become an institution with a deep culture of fear.”

● Send messages of support to [michael.gavan@neu.org.uk](mailto:michael.gavan@neu.org.uk)

■ **CAMPAIGNERS are fighting against the takeover of Brighton’s Moulsecomb primary school by the New**

Horizons Academy Trust. Workers in the NEU, Unison and GMB unions are balloting for strikes against the planned takeover.

Paul Shellard, NEU Brighton & Hove secretary, said, “Parents, staff and the council do not want an academy trust.

“The academy model is flawed and unsustainable.

“If Moulsecomb Primary joins their trust, less money will be spent on children’s education and more will be spent on CEO wages and administration.

“Our members fear this will mean cuts to staff and rising class sizes.”

● Send messages of support to [paul.shellard@neu.org.uk](mailto:paul.shellard@neu.org.uk)



# HUGE PROTESTS HIT CATALONIA

by GUYSMALLMAN in Barcelona

**ANGRY PROTESTS** swept Catalonia last weekend over harsh jail sentences handed down to activists who called the 2017 independence referendum. Over 350,000 people marched last Saturday.

The police have responded with repression. In just a week there were over 2,500 arrests and 570 protesters were hospitalised.

Police have fired rubber and foam bullets at people at close range, causing over 200 serious injuries. Four protesters have lost an eye.

The town hall in the city of Girona was occupied last Friday. The protest was over the local council cancelling a popular fiesta celebration at the behest of the police. Cops are fearful of large crowds gathering for any reason.

## Parliament

On the same day a student-led protest attracted thousands of people who marched on the Catalan parliament buildings.

They demanded an end to repression and cooperation with the legal machinery of



MORE THAN 350,000 people marched on Saturday

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

the Spanish state. Saturday saw the official response to the sentences and repression.

The 350,000-strong protest was the biggest demonstration for many years. In the evening activists gathered outside the police headquarters where, in a symbolic

act, they intended to return plastic bullets collected from the streets.

Organisers were stunned to see over 10,000 people show up. The protest blocked the main road and closed access to the building.

A convoy of national police

in vans became stranded in the crowd and had to be rescued by local Catalan police in riot gear.

Sunday saw a protest by supporters of the Spanish state in Barcelona, nearly all of who came from outside of Catalonia. The protest was

less than a third of the size of a similar event staged by the Spanish government two years ago.

But it still numbered around 80,000 people and attracted some very reactionary political elements.

Many people attended

from the far right Vox party along with more mainstream centre right politicians.

Prominent members of the Labour-type Socialist Party also joined the anti-independence march.

## Franco

Large numbers of police protected the right wingers, some of whom were waving the Francisco Franco-era Spanish flag.

They were drowned out by loud chants of, "Catalonia is anti-fascist!"

Independence demonstrations have become a focus for many other grievances with solidarity protests happening in Madrid, Bilbao, Granada and Seville. Young people in particular have been hit by brutal austerity.

The banner leading the student protest on Friday read, "If you steal our future, you will find us on the streets."

Daily protests continue and disruption is widely anticipated for the Spanish government elections, set for 10 November.

## More online

For more on the protests, go to [bit.ly/Catalonia1](https://bit.ly/Catalonia1)

## SCOTLAND

# More militant mobilisations can win a second independence referendum

by RAYMIE KIERNAN

**SCOTTISH** National Party (SNP) leader Nicola Sturgeon was set to address an outdoor pro-independence rally in Glasgow on Saturday.

She wants to make the case for a second independence referendum (indyref2) in 2020—and win votes for the SNP in a general election.

Remarkably, it is the first time Sturgeon will speak at a Yes rally since becoming Scottish first minister nearly five



A protest in solidarity with Catalonia in Glasgow PICTURE: ANDREW MCGOWAN

years ago. Hundreds of thousands have joined 21 marches organised by the All Under One Banner (AUOB) campaign across Scotland in the last few years.

Pressure from the streets earlier this year forced Sturgeon to say she will enact legislation to pursue indyref2.

Yet discontent with her strategy grows.

Sturgeon's plan is to ask for permission for a second referendum by seeking a Section 30 order.

Everyone knows the Tories will never

grant this. So her strategy has been since 2014, "Vote SNP"

Independence activists need a better strategy than waiting for the SNP to deliver. The movement must remain mobilised and bring more militancy to its demands.

The mood for indyref2 is growing.

Over 500 people protested last Saturday in Glasgow's George Square to defend the right to Catalan self-determination and demand the release of all political prisoners.

It was called by

the Catalan Defence Committee.

Significantly, it united pro-independence groups and the labour movement to condemn the violent crackdown by the Spanish state on protests.

Dave Moxham, deputy general secretary of the Scottish TUC, said, "No trade unionist can stand by and look at the violent repression that has taken place over the last week against people exercising their right to protest."

Glasgow Labour MP Paul Sweeney said, "All those >>>turn to page 19